

Mint of the United States at Philadelphia,

ASSAY DEPARTMENT,

June 6^c, 1885.

Sir

In reply to the letter of the Treasurer of the U.S. - in regard to cleaning fractional silver coin, - I would state that if the coin is only "dirty", a moderately strong solution of Potash, (the caustic, or concentrated lye is to be preferred) will make a very good cleansing agent. If the solution is hot, it will act quickly. - Wash the coin in water and better dry by cloths or in saw-dust.

If the coin is tarnished or blackened (sulphuret) a solution of cyanide of potassium, 6 or 8 ozs to gal of water and heated will quickly clean both dirt and sulphuret. It is well in both cases to stir the coin that all the surfaces may

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ASSAY DEPARTMENT,

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be exposed to the action of the alkali.

In using the cyanide, care must be used as it is poisonous.

The solutions can be used for several "batches" of coin, or until they are decidedly saturated.

The surface of the coin is much better if wiped off dry.

Very Respectfully
Jacob B. Eckfeldt
Assayer

Hon A. L. Snowden

Superintendent.

NARA RG104, Entry 1, Box 134

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